



West Chilmington & Thakeham Cricket Club

Colts' Development Plan 2017-22

1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND TO THE COLTS' SECTION

This document has been created to sit alongside the main Club Development Plan of West Chilmington and Thakeham Cricket Club ("the Club") and to outline how the Colts' management team intends to develop the Club's Colts' section on behalf of its members in the coming years.

The Club formally started its current colts' coaching structure in the summer of 2005. West Chilmington CC had a colts section which disbanded towards the end of the 20th Century and Peter Jones, Club President who had been a coach in the old regime was one of the two people asked by the first (merged) Club Chairman to create a new structure. We started with an Under 12s squad and the section has grown steadily from there.

Cricket was been played at West Chilmington since 1921 and in 2000, the two village sides of West Chilmington and Thakeham merged to become the current Club. The West Chilmington Recreation Ground itself displays many traditional aspects of a village cricket ground and is located in an area of outstanding natural beauty; it's been sympathetically developed further to provide outstanding facilities to its members. Geographically, the Club is surrounded by many rural communities, therefore the ability to provide access to cricket for areas such as West Chilmington, Thakeham, Ashington, Nutbourne, Shipley, Dial Post and many other smaller rural villages, remains an important emphasis for the Club and its development.

In 2004, it was recognised that for the club to have a sustainable future, the committee would need to develop a colts section to feed and enrich the adult sides. When the clubs merged, West Chilmington CC had around 15 playing adult members and no colts. Thakeham even less. Both clubs would have perished if the merger and impetus that it created had not happened.

A clear vision for the future of the club is essential and a pivotal aspect of this is the development, the management and the future success of the colts section.

In times of trouble, players/families, attracted to the club because of its success, will soon fall away and search for glory elsewhere. If you liken the Club to a business, loyalty is a valuable quality in any employee and anyone who learns his trade at a young age with a club is more likely to feel a duty to stay and play into their adult years.

This can be achieved by being the club for locals to join who want their children to begin in the right environment in three key areas: a) developing our facilities to attract the best players, b) maintaining and enhancing the quality of our colts' training and c) ensuring we have a clear pathway for teenagers to stay with us when other distractions kick in when they become an adult. The environment must be safe and fun.

2. A HISTORY OF THE COLTS' SECTION

a) 2005-2012

In 2002, the Club Committee started offering "fun" cricket sessions at the Club during midsummer. However it wasn't until 2005 that the Colts' section started flourishing (when England won the Ashes) under the stewardship of Brian Jeffries and Peter Jones. Over subsequent years, it grew from a few children to a large section of mainly boys that entered local leagues. As a Sussex Focus club with Clubmark, the Club is obliged to ensure it has English Cricket Board (ECB) qualified coaches running any age group. When numbers dictated, we occasionally entered an U15 league but primarily this age group played with the U16s.

Training was conducted on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights with the smaller children training on the tennis courts. Whilst we encouraged children of all ages, it was becoming increasingly apparent as the Club became more popular that the very young age group (which had become known as the Minis), was catering for children of too greater age range. As they entered the main colts section at Under 9, the coaches started having to ask many to stay in the Minis in the following season because the Colts Committee and Minis Coaches were not policing how young they were when they joined.

The issue of playing up (or coaching up) also needs to be managed effectively in any club colts' section so coaches, parents and children are clear on what the process is. Unlike in other team sports like rugby or football, cricket does on occasion have players training with older children when it benefits them. This should be the exception and not the default. The Club instigated a policy around 2008 where members of the Colts' committee review each application and agrees/declines the submission. When children train in an older age group, they are not allowed to play in their own "real" age group whereas if they train with their own age, they can play up where necessary.

b) 2013-2017

In 2013 the Club launched a **Junior Academy**, in conjunction with Sussex CCC, to allow the better players access to bespoke coaching. Despite some changes in personnel, this continued to be a big success. It started with children between the ages of Under 10 and Under 14 and contained a girl amongst its numbers. A major obstacle is the additional cost of the outside coaches which is partially offset by collecting an additional Academy fee from parents of participating children.

Having identified the "better" colts the Club also ensured that any child nominated for an Area or a full County trial would need to be approved and nominated by the Academy managers and not by a parent or an age group coach. This policy ensured the nomination was objective and balanced. This was largely adopted quickly and very successfully.

The Club also launched a fledgling **Girls' section** in 2013. Numbers were initially small but grew quickly so that we had nearly 30 in number of varying ages and ability in 2015.

In 2014, the Club also addressed the issue of very young children entering the colts' section. There was an age cap put on Minis – only U7s and U8s could join (Year 2 and 3 at school) to avoid too many children of different ages signing up. There was little issue successfully implementing this new process.

One of the most successful changes to the Colts' section was a move to coaching most juniors on a Friday evening.

This was achieved by splitting the squads rotating every 20 minutes on stations in 90 minute periods. The first 90 minutes had the younger ages – the Minis didn't rotate – before the older age groups up to Under 14 joined later. Despite some initial scepticism from some coaches, the evenings have been a huge success and continue to be so.

Allied to this change was the Colts' Chairman's objective for the children to play cricket with more intensity. Key areas of improvement were identified such as greatly improving the running between the wickets and attacking fielding from the off. Both aspects which all West Chiltington sides had struggled with including the adults. In addition, children should play as many games as possible to improve their match awareness to ensure that they are mentally prepared to bat, field and bowl as well as being technically equipped.

Fundamentally, there was a desire to ensure we have a team of individuals who play together and don't just rely on one or two players to get them out of trouble with bat or ball. This started to bear fruit in 2015 when

several age groups won leagues or Sussex cricket festivals.

This success has continued with teams in 2016 and 2017 winning leagues and competing in the finals of the SJCF

3. A VISION OF TOMORROW (2017 and beyond)

The aim of the cricket club is to make West Chiltington & Thakeham CC the club of choice for prospective junior and senior cricketers of all abilities within its catchment areas. In summary, this will be achieved by:

- Providing competitive and enjoyable cricket for all age groups
- Maintaining a strong and well run junior section
- Development of both junior and senior players
- Providing facilities suitable to meet the standards required by the Sussex League
- Provide excellent equipment and facilities for all members
- Maintain high standards of coaching available to all players and ensure 'coach to player' ratios are within ECB guidelines
- Maintain and enhance the Club's reputation as an open and friendly club that provides a warm welcome to all players, supporters and visitors

All the above aims apply equally to the Colts' section as they do to the Adults.

In 2017, the Club, in accordance with their stated vision, reappointed a Level 3 qualified Club Coach to run the 1st XI training and to continue to change the culture, from the junior section all the way through to seniors towards, to attending constructive coaching sessions including fielding drills at all levels, pre match warm ups, grass wicket net sessions etc.

It is recognised that a vibrant and healthy junior section is the key to achieving our long term objectives as stated in the "West Chiltington and Thakeham 5 Year Development Plan" document.

"Academy" to "Select Player Programme"

The Academy was established in 2013 with the intention of identifying the most talented colts from U11's to U14's and to provide them with additional/bespoke coaching.

However, at the end of 2016 the club decided to review this offering and as a result 2017 saw the introduction of the **Select Players Programme. (SPP).**

Under the guidance of the Club Coach and a specially appointed **SPP** Manager, a group of talented colts were invited to attend an 8 week intensive training/coaching course that ran from early May until mid-June. Initial feedback and results suggest this has been a success and whilst the SPP will continue to be monitored the intension is continue providing additional coaching for a select group for the foreseeable future

Junior Coaching

It is a stated objective to improve coaching standards for all age groups and for all players, not just a select group.

Whilst the Colts' section has had fully qualified coaches for over ten years, it was agreed, in addition to the appointment of the Club Coach in 2016 that from time to time the club should seek the services of additional coaches.

These coaches would work alongside the Club Coach and existing age group coaches/managers and offer technical input.

In keeping with this, the club appointed its first Friday evening coach at the start of the 2017 season and was able to provide additional Friday evening coaching support for two specific age groups. The feedback is that this was a success and as a result the club will endeavour to engage the services of additional coaches for the 2018 season.

The benefit is not only to the quality of coaching being received by the age groups but will also allow existing coaches to develop and share ideas.

The overall strategy for the development of Colts cricket is based on the following general objectives

- **Continue to provide a “Mini Minis” section.** This will provide start up cricket for U5s and U6s. Some have older siblings at the Club and a few others have been disappointed when the age group cap was introduced at the start of the 2014 season.
- **Continuous improvement of all boys and girls** and not just SPP children. This will be achieved, in part, by developing the quality of home grown coaches but also as previously mentioned by introducing external coaches.
- **Retaining as many children as possible beyond Under 16.** This is crucial and to ensure this happens the club are constantly reviewing and ensuring pathway for teenagers of all abilities to play cricket at West Chilmington.

Not all colts will have the ability or the desire to play 1st XI cricket but the keys is to allow those that want to play senior cricket to have access to it when they are ready.

Clearly the desire for some is to play for the 1st XI but the key is to retain others to join the 2s, 3s or the Sunday side and/or have the potential to take on a role at the Club when they're older, this is just as valuable.

To encourage this the club will review the availability of different types of cricket from T20, “Last man standing”, shorter format league cricket.

- **Improve the coaching in the Girls section.** The Girls' Coach who started the section in 2013 needs some assistance as the group has snowballed. The section is now a section in their own right and more supervision and management are vital if we are to grow it further.
- **Integrate the SPP into the Colts' Section.** The SPP and previously the Academy have been a major factor in the Club attracting players from further afield and is an important reason why the Club has become more successful in junior cricket. Whilst this is fantastic, it is important that new players are made to feel a part of the Club as quickly as possible.

The plan is to enhance the night when the SPP, the U16s training and the Adult training takes place so that Tuesdays become the new Fridays. The SPP must be transparent in publishing clear guidelines for coaches on how to nominate and also to explain the process better for parents as to how children get nominated for County trials. Whilst it is for the elite, it must not be elitist. The Club Coach will work with the Colts' Chairman and Academy Manager to extend the age range from U14 to U18. There's also a consideration to invite very young players below U10 to participate.

- **Succession Planning.** The Colts' section has grown rapidly to become the mainstay of the Club in numbers. It also generates significant revenue in subscriptions and in food and bar takings brought in on the main coaching night. Whilst numbers have swelled, volunteer support has not grown to the same extent and not only do more members and parents need to step forward but existing committee members need to start looking to see who will take over from them.

4. LOGISTICS

4.1. Qualified Coaches

The Club will continue to encourage members and non-playing members (particularly parents) to gain qualifications as detailed below. In addition, prior to the start of each outdoor season, the Club Coach will conduct a coaching refresher for all coaches and Coach Support Workers (CSW).

4.1.1. Cricket and Cricket Related Workshops. To improve overall understanding of cricket and other related topics, the Colts Vice Chairman and Child Welfare Officer will continue to circulate details to all members of local workshops and encourage them to attend. These workshops will be on subjects such as Child Protection, First Aid, Equity in Your Coaching, How to Coach Disabled Performers etc.

4.1.2. Coaching Courses. The Club will support members and helpers to attend and attain the following qualifications:

4.1.2.1. ECB CSW (UKCC 1) which equips the beginner coach with skills and knowledge to assist more qualified coaches delivering aspects of coaching sessions, normally under direct supervision; and

4.1.2.2. ECB Coach Level 2 Award (UKCC 2) which allows coaches to introduce and develop the game of cricket to people of all ages in a fun and enjoyable way.

4.1.3. Refunding Course Costs. The Club recognises the significant commitment, time, and effort members and helpers of the Club put in, to both attain their coaching qualifications and then apply them, so the cost of all approved courses will be funded by the Club following appropriate authorisation by the main Club Committee.

4.1.4. Coaching Numbers. The Club's intention is to have the following coaches available as a minimum: one ECB Coach and one ECB CSW per age group – up to 20 children. Below Under 9 where age groups are combined, the ECB qualified coach should ensure they have a greater number of coach support workers to manage the greater numbers. Under 15 and U16 train together but combined squads rarely hit 20. This may change if we can improve the pathway.

4.2. Junior Recruitment

The Club is keen to encourage boys and girls within the local catchment area to enjoy and play cricket. It remains important to manage numbers, in particular where age group numbers become difficult to manage effectively. 20 per age group is usually a sensible limit as a guide.

4.2.1.1. Club and Schools Partnerships. The Club will further strengthen ties within the West Chiltington and Thakeham parishes. Primarily, the Club will continue to develop its Schools' Partnership with Rydon Community College, but will also look to include West Chiltington, Thakeham, Washington and Ashington First Schools. More work can also be done with private schools such as Dorset House in Bury. The objectives of these partnerships will be to: i) encourage and provide appropriate opportunities for further development and participation to those young people who may be interested; ii) give the Club the fullest possible opportunity to present its programmes to possible new members; and iii) ensure the provision of coaching expertise and leadership in the sport of cricket is available at both Club and school level.

The Club will continue to advertise in its partner schools via newsletters, posters and via the Chance to Shine state school cricket programme supported by Sussex CCC.

4.3. Colts' Committee Structure

Since 2005, the Club has had a Colts' Chairman responsible for all aspects of youth development as an elected member of the main management committee. In 2013 a Colts' Vice-Chairman (VC) was introduced to help with the ever increasing workload. Both will seek guidance from the Club Coach from time to time. There is no formal colts' committee structure at the Club; the age group coaches meet monthly in the off season. If any decision requires further evaluation at any time during the year e.g. children coaching up an age group or disciplinary issues, the Colts Chairman will appoint two unrelated (to the discussion) coaches (and the Club Chairman if a disciplinary hearing) to decide on an outcome. This situation will be reviewed from time to time

4.4. Child Welfare Officer (CWO)

The role of the CWO is to protect the welfare of all junior male and female members left in the trust of the Club. Particular responsibilities include a) ensuring the Club Youth Policy is kept current, b) that all Managers, Coaches and authorised helpers are i) issued with the latest version of this document and its appendices, ii) conversant with the policies and procedures contained within it, and iii) have been approved as suitable for involvement with Junior Members of the Club following the submission of CRB and Child Protection Data Forms, and c) will take responsibility for all disciplinary and child welfare matters. Any injury sustained at coaching or during a match at the Recreation Ground needs recording in the Accident Book held in the Pavilion.

The CWO will also: a) hold the Annual Junior Membership and Registration Forms; b) act as the first point of contact for the reporting of any abuse if it is believed to have taken place; c) be a valuable source of information about the Club; d) uphold confidentiality as far as practical, and e) hold the Members Qualification Records.

4.5. Junior Practice Nights

Formal coaching at the Club is available during summer and winter months. Outdoor practice will commence in late April as leagues start in early May and run until the end of August. The majority will be run on Friday nights with the Academy and U16s on a midweek date to be determined. Sessions are split to cater for all the different

age groups identified for that season. Each group will be run by the qualified coaches, and these sessions will be geared towards fun and maximum participation for all, as well as working on core skills. A junior coaching programme is to be managed by the Club Coach each season to ensure specific skills are developed at each age group; therefore achieving a consistent level of coaching and attainment for all junior players.

In addition to Club coaching, individual coaching is available from the Club Coach. Other 1-2-1 coaching is available!

4.6. Junior Matches

The Club's colts' ethos can be summed up by "compete in the league but try and win the festival".

The Club now regularly enters teams into the indoor cricket leagues that are run over the winter months at various venues in Sussex.

These have proven to be very important as they allow children to maintain and enhance skills throughout the winter.

In the summer, when the outdoor leagues are run is also an important consideration. Older children leagues need to be midweek to maximise the chances of these children being available at weekends for senior cricket.

The Club will continue to offer excellent facilities for practice and due to the increasing number of boys and girls sides, some younger league matches will be played away from West Chiltington at nearby grounds so that the quality of the square is upheld.

The Club will also offer the different age groups the opportunities to enter and play in the various cricket festivals held within the county, and these will be determined by age, ability and availability.

All Sussex festival matches will be played at the Recreation Ground.

As a result of the growth in the number of Colts it has become necessary to more clearly define the selection policy, especially for the games held during the weeks when the Sussex Junior Cricket Festival (SJCF) is being held.

This is a very popular festival and children are keen to play their part.

Referring to the ethos of "compete in the league but play to win the festival" the following caveat will be introduced for the 2018 season.

4.7. Senior Matches

Juniors are encouraged to play in senior matches for both enjoyment and their development; all senior league and friendly teams will be available for this. The Colts Chairman and Coach need to work on a pathway to ensure they feel comfortable to step up. e.g. playing in pairs. The 3rd XI is ideal for this.

Select Player Programme. The Club will continue with its policy, run by the Club Coach of identifying and maximising the development of the most talented youngsters. An assessment of nominated players will be run indoors followed by weekly development sessions outside using the Club's own facilities. An SPP team is entered annually into the ECB National U13 and U15 Cups and matches will also be arranged with other County League clubs.

4.8. Insurance

The Club will always ensure adequate insurance is in place to cover all junior activities i.e. matches, practice, travel etc. and that ECB Coaches are members of the ECB Coaches Association.

4.9. Club Youth Policy

In 2004, the Club implemented a comprehensive Youth Policy (available as a separate Club document) which is maintained in-line with the ECB's Safe Hands Policy and covers the following:

4.9.1. Annual Junior Membership and Registration;

4.9.2. Child Protection Data Form;

- 4.9.3. Annual Membership and Attendance Fees;
- 4.9.4. Complaint and Disciplinary Procedures;
- 4.9.5. Codes of Conduct for Managers, Coaches, Authorised Helpers, Junior Members and Parents/Guardians;
- 4.9.6. Child Protection Policy;
- 4.9.7. Good Practice Guidelines;
- 4.9.8. Incident Reporting; and
- 4.9.9. Local Contact List.

4.10. Equipment

In line with the general Club policy, the Colts Vice Chairman will ensure that a high standard of equipment will be maintained for junior cricket covering each of the age groups supported.

4.11. ECB and Sussex County Cricket Club Development Officers

The Club will continue to seek advice and guidance from the Club Coach as well as development officers at both national and county level.

4.12. Horsham District Council's Leisure Development Team

The Club will also liaise with this team to look at the best methods for implementing the Plan, and what resources and help they can bring to help achieve its aims.

4.14 Disability Policy

The Club is keen to embrace all who wish to learn and play the game irrespective of gender, creed, colour or ability; this includes those who wish to simply enjoy the game without participating. To make this achievable, the two key areas below will be constantly assessed.

- **Physical Access** - the Club's new Pavilion opened in 2014 was built to the specification of the Disability Discrimination Act of 2010. Where we have individuals with mobility issues, we will ensure that the opposition are alerted for away games on a case by case basis.
- **Participation** - the Club will ensure that its cricket for all policy is thoroughly implemented and provides the opportunity for adults and children with learning and/or physical disabilities to participate wherever possible. Where circumstances prevent this, the Club will engage with other local clubs and build links with them to provide opportunities for participation e.g. blind cricket.

5. CERTIFICATIONS AND OUTSIDE ASSOCIATIONS

5.1. Clubmark

A key aim of this plan is the continued development of junior cricket, and a key aspect of this development is Clubmark accreditation. Clubmark was introduced by Sport England and is supported by the ECB, and is intended to ensure that clubs working with children apply consistent good practice and exceed minimum operating standards in four areas: playing sport, child care and protection, sports equity and ethics, and club management. The Club worked hard to achieve the standards required for Clubmark accreditation, and in March 2007 this significant milestone was attained. In years since, it has been reaccredited and this must continue.

5.2 Focus Club

Once Clubmark accreditation was awarded and to allow the Club to continue its development, the Committee recognised the need to achieve Focus Club status from the Sussex County Cricket Club/ECB. Becoming a Focus Club recognises the Club's strategic importance to the county of Sussex and a commitment to long-term junior development, and provides the following benefits:

- Aides recruitment key and specific volunteers to help junior programmes
- Aids training/support for coaches, umpires, scorers, grounds men and other volunteers
- Helps gain additional support by creating links with local partners
- Providing coaches and/or coaching to create partnerships with local schools
- Technical advice to help better plan and deliver coaching and match programmes
- Technical advice to help better plan and deliver facility improvements
- Lobbying key partners to help support activity and/or facility developments
- Offering support and advice on raising funds from local and national sources

- o Providing where possible, direct funding and/or priority for indirect funding

To gain Focus Club status, the Club was required to maintain Clubmark accreditation, work with the District Development Group to ensure integrated community links, produce a long-term development plan to increase capacity and improve quality, link with local school and community networks and commit to monitoring and evaluation of how the Club impacts the local community. After much hard work, in April 2008, the Club was granted Focus Club status, and again it has been reaccredited since. We will continue to work hard to maintain this status.

6 COMMUNICATION

In 2008, the Club revamped its website to provide a far more comprehensive site for information and access to information about cricket; this can be found at <http://www.wctcc.org.uk> The Club also regularly publishes articles in the two local parish quarterly newsletters and local papers, and at the start of each season, a Members Handbook is created and distributed to all members which was itself enlarged and revamped in 2013, VIPs, sponsors etc. detailing fixtures, social events etc.

A Club newsletter issued regularly to all members and parents (weekly during the season) is also a key method of communicating with all members and interested parties.

The Colts section also uses Facebook a great deal to communicate with children and parents and the Club also “tweets” from time to time to attract members (and external parties) to Facebook and the website

7 CONCLUSION

For this plan to be successful, it must a) be supported by all members and parents of the Club, b) have members and volunteers willing and committed to implement, and c) be regularly reviewed and updated as the Club progresses. Overall, the goal has always been for the Cricket Club to become a centre of excellence for junior and senior cricket as Pulborough RFC is locally for rugby.

The Colts’ section at West Chiltington has become a vital part of the cricket club and the local community. It is important that the growth is maintained but effectively managed to ensure that it continues to be a success.

This is a living document and any comments are welcome to the Colts Chairman or Vice Chairman at any time.